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THE TEACHER AIDE IN NORTH CAROLINA'S COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT.

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THIS REPORT DESCRIBES THE SELECTION, CHARACTERISTICS, AND UTILIZATION OF TEACHER AIDES IN THE COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT. AN AIDE WAS ASSIGNED TO THREE TEACHERS IN THE PROJECT TO ASSIST THEM WITH CLERICAL, INSTRUCTIONAL, TECHNOLOGICAL, AND GENERAL DUTIES. SELECTION CRITERIA INCLUDED ABILITY AND EXPERIENCE IN MOTIVATING AND WORKING WITH CHILDREN, EMOTIONAL STABILITY, ADAPTABILITY, GOOD HEALTH AND INTELLIGENCE, WILLINGNESS TO WORK WITH ALL CULTURAL GROUPS, KNOWLEDGE OF SAFETY AND FIRST AID, AND TYPING SKILL. THE AVERAGE AIDE WAS FOUND TO BE A YOUNG WOMAN OF 32, WITH CHILDREN, AN AREA RESIDENT (SMALL TOWN OR RURAL), WITH MORE THAN THE MINIMUM 2 YEARS OF COLLEGE, AND USED TO DEALING WITH CHILDREN IN CHURCH-RELATED ACTIVITIES. TRAINING WAS MOSTLY ON-THE-JOB. AFTER WORKING AS AIDES, 49 PERCENT WERE PLANNING FOR TEACHER CERTIFICATION, 27 PERCENT WERE NOT, 16 PERCENT WERE ALREADY CERTIFIED, 5 PERCENT WERE UNDECIDED, AND 3.5 PERCENT DID NOT RESPOND. LISTED AS PROBLEMS BY 15 PERCENT WERE TEACHER COMPETITION FOR THEIR SERVICES, UNCLEAR DUTIES, AND LACK OF SPACE TO WORK WITH LARGE GROUPS. QUESTIONNAIRES AND DEPTH INTERVIEWS AFTER THE 1ST YEAR REVEALED THAT MOST SCHOOL PERSONNEL STRONGLY FAVOR THE USE OF AIDES. HOWEVER, MORE MEN WOULD BE DESIRABLE (EARLY RETIREES ARE A POSSIBLE SOURCE). ADVANCEMENT AND USE OF AIDES FOR PERSONAL SUPPORT TO UNDERACHIEVERS AND THE DISADVANTAGED NEEDS FURTHER STUDY. (AF)

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THE TEACHER AIDE

IN NORTH CAROLINA'S
COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL
IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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CSIP

THE TEACHER AIDE

IN NORTH CAROLINA'S COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

A joint undertaking of the State Board of Education and the Ford Foundation through the North Carolina Fund

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FOREWORD

There is every indication that North Carolina's Comprehensive School Improvement Project, now in its second year of operation, is fulfilling the expectations which prompted the origination of this development program in 1963. Aimed at improving instruction at the primary level, with special emphasis on language arts and arithmetic, the CSIP program is encouraging such innovations as team teaching, nongraded organization, and the use of teacher aides, as well as extensive and effective utilization of diversified instructional materials and audiovisual aids. It relies heavily on the initiative of local school personnel in planning and evaluating their CSIP programs, in cooperation with college consultants and the State staff.

This bulletin reports on one important phase of the program—the utilization of teacher aides. It reviews the purposes and assumptions which impelled the decision to employ teacher aides to work with each team of three cooperating teachers; presents information on the education, experience, and other pertinent facts about the background of persons employed as aides; and offers detailed data pertaining to the duties assigned them.

Most significantly, perhaps, it reports a strong positive attitude toward the utilization of teacher aides on the part of the great majority of the teachers, principals, supervisors, superintendents, and college consultants closely involved in the CSIP programs. Most of the professional people indicated in their responses to questionnaires that they thought the teacher aides have had a beneficial effect on the instructional program and have contributed appreciatively to cooperative planning.

This strong affirmative response is at once indicative of the success of this phase of the CSIP program and the willingness of professional personnel to accept and to make the most of promising innovations. One interesting finding is that the overwhelming majority of classroom teachers and school administrators feel that the utilization of teacher aides is not a threat to the professional status of teachers.

The report also offers a number of conclusions and recommendations based on the results of the survey, and poses several questions deserving further exploration.

Taken together, the findings presented in this bulletin indicate a favorable climate for educational change, a recognition of the need to explore new ways to effectuate instructional improvement, and a willingness to exercise initiative and critical judgment in planning and evaluating new programs.

Chas. F. Carroll

State Superintendent of Public Instruction

May 1966

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INTRODUCTION

In 1963 the State Board of Education authorized the development of a program to be known as the Comprehensive School Improvement Project (CSIP), as a joint undertaking of the State Board of Education and the Ford Foundation, aimed at improving the instructional program in the primary grades.

The project is based on the belief that professional educators, working within local school situations, can and will give leadership in planning, implementing, and evaluating programs designed to improve learning opportunities for children.

The CSIP is financed by a two-million-dollar appropriation from the State Board of Education matched by a like grant from the Ford Foundation operating through the North Carolina Fund. The project is coordinated through the offices of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Dr. Charles F. Carroll, and is directed by Dr. Woodrow B. Sugg. Presently some 600 teachers and 200 teacher aides are participating in nearly 200 schools throughout the State. In addition, 80 college consultants, 192 principals, 111 superintendents, and 150 supervisors are involved in the project, which serves approximately 17,000 primary school children.

PURPOSES AND ASSUMPTIONS

The major purposes of the CSIP experimental program are—

1. *To improve the primary level of public school education in North Carolina with special emphasis on the teaching and learning of language arts and mathematics, by encouraging experimentation in promising educational practices in the areas of (a) curriculum, (b) methods, (c) materials, (d) time, and (e) talent.*
2. *To improve preparation of many preschool youth for successful entry into the first grade of the public schools of the State.*
3. *To promote professional growth of and in-service education activities for participating public school staff members.*
4. *To facilitate a partnership between the public schools and the teacher training institutions of North Carolina.*

5. *To serve as a laboratory in which possible future directions of educational improvement may be developed for the State.*

Among the identified assumptions which have guided the implementation of the Comprehensive School Improvement Project are the following:

1. *There is an essential need to seek continuously to improve the learning opportunities for the children of the State.*
2. *When a facilitating and encouraging climate is present, public school staff members will more fully realize their potential and will be increasingly perceptive in meeting the instructional needs of children.*
3. *The responsibility for effective educational change and innovation lies in a large measure with public school staff members working in local school situations.*
4. *Opportunities to exchange ideas and to observe teaching and learning within productive situations will result in an assessment of strengths and weaknesses and will help stimulate changes in attitudes and in practice.*
5. *Effective leadership occurs when the school administrator helps to create an environment conducive to improved educational planning, innovation, and evaluation.*
6. *The utilization of nonprofessional personnel (specifically teacher aides) will free the teachers of much of the nonprofessional and routine duties, thus permitting them to concern themselves more intensely with rendering professional service in instructing youth.*

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CSIP

Two principal distinctive characteristics of the North Carolina Comprehensive School Improvement Project are (1) it is field oriented, and (2) it is developmental.

The field aspect gives the experimental program unusual breadth in that its laboratory is in "live" school settings in a great many

public schools and in all areas of the State. It is developmental in that as study, implementation and evaluation are carried on simultaneously, there is considerable freedom to modify program, procedures, and activities as experience is gained and as new approaches justify adaptations. The interplay of field and developmental attributes clearly provides *extensive* laboratory settings for *intensive* program development and operation.

Staff members of each participating school are encouraged to develop new and improved curricular approaches and to search for better and more effective organizational patterns of teaching. Each school is allocated special funds with which to obtain and utilize a variety of instructional materials and to employ special consultant services.

The CSIP program is packaged in two parts: the six-week Summer Readiness phase and the Regular School Year Program. Though these two programs are related, neither is dependent upon the other. The short summer activity is designed to serve youth of limited social and educational experience who are to enter the first grade the following fall. The full-year aspect of the CSIP typically involves three classes of primary-age students who may be school beginners, youngsters in their second or third years of school, or any combination thereof.

Most of the school year field teams consist of three classroom teachers supported by one nonprofessional teacher aide, and the team is assisted by a consultant from a North Carolina college or university. This planning and implementing team is aided by the principal of the participating school and by a coordinator from the school system's central office. Provided resources for travel to other experimental school settings and some monies for special instructional materials and equipment, this group carries responsibility for CSIP program planning, implementation, and evaluation in each participating school.

The Comprehensive School Improvement Project State staff of three professional members is a part of the State Department of Public Instruction. They serve as CSIP coordinators and stimulators and work with all participating schools.

I. WHY TEACHER AIDES ARE BEING EMPLOYED BY CSIP

New and urgent needs associated with the considerable changes and transitions occurring throughout our culture call for updating of the school organizational structure. Aware of the scope and complexity of these demands, educators may overlook some of the less spectacular and less complicated possibilities for instructional improvement. Perhaps more involvement of teachers in brainstorming and decision making would yield substantial dividends in suggesting such possibilities.

One of the chief obstacles to improvement of the educational process frequently cited by teachers is the limited time afforded them for teaching and for the thinking and planning essential to developing more effective instructional activities. The teaching act, especially at the primary level, involves a complex process of social interaction both between teacher and pupil and among pupils. It is most difficult for the teacher to devote sufficient time to individual attention when, as some surveys indicate, as much as one-fifth of the elementary school teacher's school day is consumed with clerical and other nonprofessional duties not directly related to instruction.

While there are generally no ready-made solutions to the problem of providing more time to teach, there are two obvious actions which, if taken, would probably facilitate better teaching. One is the more commonly recognized move of reducing the ratio of pupils per teacher unit; the other is providing clerical and monitorial assistance in addition to some instructional support for the teacher. Already much has and is being done in North Carolina to reduce the teacher-pupil ratio, and through the Comprehensive School Improvement Project the use of teacher aides is receiving a fair test in over 600 classrooms throughout the State.

The decision to provide the financial means to enable participating schools to employ a teacher aide for each group of three cooperating teachers was based on certain assumptions discussed in the

following section. Taken together, these assumptions, based on experience in the utilization of teacher aides in various school programs in other parts of the country, and on conclusions derived from research in group dynamics, indicate that qualified teacher aides can contribute in several ways to the improvement of the instructional program:

- *Assisting the teachers with clerical work and other non-professional tasks so they can devote more time to planning, providing more individual instructional attention for children, and meeting the personal-social needs of children.*
- *Engaging in cooperative planning activities which would promote a higher degree of staff interaction, stimulating creativity in planning.*
- *Facilitating extension and expansion of the instructional program by providing additional services and increasing utilization of technological media.*

The purpose of this publication is to share information gained through questionnaires and interviews on the role and function of the teacher aide in North Carolina's Comprehensive School Improvement Project. It is hoped that this information will contribute something to the picture of how the teacher aide might be effectively utilized as more financial support becomes available for improving education.

GUIDING ASSUMPTIONS

The decision to utilize teacher aides in the local CSIP programs was based on certain assumptions which indicated ways in which they could be expected to contribute to the improvement of the instructional program. These assumptions include what are thought to be well-warranted suppositions about the beneficial effects of group interaction and the type of personality traits deemed essential for the success of cooperative activities. Among the principal assumptions involved were the following:

1. *Teachers who are open-minded and perceptive will utilize the ancillary services of an aide in ways which will result in a better instructional program for children. These same personality traits are also important characteristics for the teacher aide if he or she is to function optimally as a member of a professional team.*

Since the use of teacher aides requires closer and more intensive working relationships than are involved in most traditional classrooms, something more needs to be said about the importance of an open-minded attitude as a necessary condition for productive and harmonious working relationships.

Probably the most important single factor in the development of the kind of cooperative working relationships which produce good morale and well-supported decisions is the individual's ability to remain open-minded. A person's "openness"—to himself, the feelings of others, and the world of ideas—is a prerequisite for the success of any instructional program which is to be characterized as flexible and developmental. This concept suggests that the individual has the ability to remain adaptive, developing and changing continuously in light of new experience; and this depends mainly upon his effectiveness in minimizing "threat." (*Threat* may be defined as that complex of factors which tends to produce an overt or hidden fear regarding the security of the individual's self-organization or value and attitudinal structure.) For groups engaged in the process of cooperative planning, "threat" often occurs as a result of the perception of an imposed force which requires a change in the individual's "way of doing things."

The complex interpersonal relationships involved in working together cooperatively offer a real challenge to almost any group of people seeking to grow together professionally and to arrive at more creative and more adequate decisions in terms of both individually and cooperatively defined purposes. A productive decision-making effort by a team requires a willingness on the part of group members to consider each idea with minimal bias so that meaningful ideas may be given a fair and reasonably objective hearing. Evidence gained from research in group dynamics and studies by field theory psychologists suggests that when people who are concerned with a particular problem strive to make decisions cooperatively, strong group cohesion develops, morale improves, tensions and anxieties are reduced and energy is expended more creatively, resulting in increased productivity.

2. *The addition of a teacher aide to a professional instructional team of teachers will enhance the chances for close personal relationships and individual attention between pupils and members of the instructional team.*

For a long time now, many educators have agreed that learning is enhanced by three-way communication: teacher-to-pupil, pupil-to-teacher, and between and among pupils. Much learning of consequence results from incidental learning experience which, as most experienced teachers have discovered, often involves a pupil-to-pupil relationship.

Some observers of various preschool educational programs such as Operation Head Start or New York's Higher Horizons have concluded that these programs were successful in large measure because of close personal pupil support rather than because of any magical method. Perhaps such support was possible because there were additional staff members to work with the children. It is thought that adding an aide to the staff increases the potential for communication between instructional staff members and pupils as well as among pupils because more personal attention is available and interactional opportunities are increased.

3. The introduction of a teacher aide as a member of a professional team of teachers will promote improved staff interaction.

The introduction of a mature, intelligent adult who functions within the framework of a helping relationship as a member of a professional team can improve staff interaction. A team of mature adults, taking advantage of their combined intellectual resources and experiences and their collective intelligence, can make a greater contribution to the program than any one member. The effect is to stimulate the individual as a source of creative ideas and to encourage him to conduct an open-minded search for ways to improve. Thus the gains acquired through cooperative interaction of the members of the group can exceed the sum of their separate efforts. In order to bring cooperative interaction into play, a supportive atmosphere must be maintained; encouraging the exposure of concerns, feelings, and ideas by members of the group is essential. Individuals should feel free to share their ideas with little fear of revealing possible inadequacies. Such supportive relationship is seen in the group spirit typical of outstanding athletic teams, certain corporation leadership groups, and teams of astronauts and acquanauts.

Although cooperative planning has taken place for years in many North Carolina elementary schools, few would assert that the quality, type, and frequency of planning sessions involving teachers meeting for the purpose of reviewing certain problems of an instructional nature should not be improved as to their general effectiveness. With the allocation of one teacher aide for each team of from two to five or six teachers, it was thought, there should be increased productivity from the planning sessions. The teacher aide, performing as an adjunct member of the team, could contribute to the process of interaction. The fact that cooperative teams have been established should in itself increase the participation of practicing teachers in arriving at decisions regarding the evaluation and improvement of the instructional program. From their planning should evolve a more effective use of teaching time and competencies. Realistic cooperative diagnosis of pupils' needs and better understanding of their backgrounds are likely results.

The importance of participation must not be minimized. Research studies emanating from the group dynamics movement and more recent data stemming from the space and undersea efforts involving astronauts and acquanauts show an increasing urge for more autonomy and freedom on the part of team members in making decisions while on the job and at the instant of action.

4. The use of teacher aides will facilitate the extension and expansion of the instructional program through additional services and increased utilization of technological media.

Developments under way in audiovisual education offer real promise to teachers who are attempting to make learning situations more interesting and meaningful for the learner. Effective use of audiovisual media requires some assistance for the teacher if the mechanized portion of independent and small group study is to be optimal. This could range from individual filmstrip viewing to the more complex information retrieval system which enables pupils to dial their requests for videotape to be shown on individual television sets located in their study carrels.

Utilization of the ever increasing supply of educational hardware and newer media involves at least three major functions: operation, storage, and minor maintenance. Proper use of this equipment in the instructional program might include development of tapes, transparencies, and filmstrips, not to mention materials which are still on the drawing board, involving considerable preparation and know-how. Toward this end the teachers' aide can perform a most worthwhile function by absorbing much of the responsibility for these time-consuming and somewhat specialized tasks.

II. A LOOK AT CSIP TEACHER AIDES

Because the Comprehensive School Improvement Project is a developmental program, this report is intended to provide only a tentative interim description of the role and function of the teacher aide in the project schools throughout North Carolina. No attempt is made to determine a functional relationship between the utilization of teacher aides and any possible improvements in pupil achievement; rather, this report is limited to interpretation of data gathered through questionnaires, observations, and personal interviews with CSIP participants.

Some of the questions asked of CSIP participants, (teachers, principals, supervisors, superintendents, and college consultants) and a resume of their responses are offered in the following paragraphs in addition to what was felt to be a representative sample of comments from the field regarding the contributions of the teacher aide as a member of an instructional team.

EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE

A great majority of the CSIP teacher aides have a dual role as housewives and teacher aides; more than 63 percent have children of their own. Most reside in small towns and rural areas (see Table I). Of relevance is the fact that teacher aides, unlike a number of teachers, were residents of the school community prior to employment and were not attracted to the community because of the job.

TABLE I **POPULATION DENSITY**

Location of CSIP Units	Percent
Rural area	21.1
Residential suburb	5.2
Industrial suburb	4.7
Small town (5,000 or less)	29.0
City of 5,000 to 50,000	27.0
Residential area of larger city (over 50,000)	9.0
Inner part of larger city (over 50,000)	4.0

TABLE II	AGE OF TEACHER AIDES		
Age Group	Percent	Age Group	Percent
under 21	2.1	46-50	9.0
21-25	31.2	51-55	2.0
26-30	16.3	56-60	2.1
31-35	13.4	61-65	1.5
36-40	14.0	66 or older	-0-
41-45	8.4	No Response	1.0

Table II shows that for the most part CSIP aides are young women; their average age is 32 years.

In regard to the level of educational attainment, Table III indicates that most aides have more than the CSIP program's minimal suggested requirement of two years of college preparation. The college majors most frequently mentioned, in order of priority, were as follows: elementary education, business education, business administration, home economics, and English. More than 20 college majors were represented. Some aides who had two years of college or less had not been enrolled for a sufficient time to consider themselves as having had a major.

TABLE III LEVEL OF EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT	
	Percent of Aides
Less than high school diploma	-0-
High school diploma	1.6
1 year of college	2.6
2 years of college	38.4
3 years of college	17.1
4 years of college but did not complete degree	5.3
4 years of college with degree	34.0
5 years of college	1.0

TABLE IVa
EXPERIENCE (PUBLIC) IN WORKING WITH YOUNG CHILDREN

	Considerable	Some	Limited	None
Summer workshops	4.7	6.7	4.1	84.5
Operation Head Start	8.8	6.1	1.6	83.5
Driver education	0.5	-0-	-0-	99.5
Recreation	1.6	1.0	-0-	97.4
Substitute teaching	29.5	19.2	8.3	43.0
High school teaching	3.1	4.1	2.5	90.3
Junior high school teaching	2.0	3.6	2.5	91.9
Elementary school teaching (temporary basis without certificate)	10.9	5.1	2.0	82.0

TABLE IVb
EXPERIENCE (PRIVATE) IN WORKING WITH YOUNG CHILDREN

	Considerable	Some	Limited	None
Summer camps	6.0	18.4	4.3	71.3
Chuch work	58.0	27.3	4.5	10.2
Scouting	12.1	11.0	2.5	74.4
YMCA, YWCA	3.1	3.8	3.1	90.0
Tutor	1.0	-0-	-0-	99.0
Piano teacher	0.5	-0-	-0-	99.5
Baby sitting	1.6	2.1	-0-	96.3
Private kindergarten	3.6	1.6	-0-	94.8
Private nursery school	1.0	-0-	-0-	99.0

Tables IVa and IVb show a representative list of the kind and degree of the teacher aides' experience in working with young children. Experience through church related activities was the most often checked item.

With respect to work experience other than teaching, a number of CSIP aides had worked in the business world as secretaries, store clerks, and bookkeepers. For 13 percent the job as an aide was their first full-time employment responsibility.

SELECTION

Because employment of personnel is the responsibility of the local school boards and the delegated function of the superintendent of schools, with the principal usually offering recommendations, the local administration has much to do with determining selection procedure. A selective criterion is generally a matter of oral agreement between those doing the interviewing, the superintendent, and the school board.

Some of the selection characteristics which have been identified by many of North Carolina's school administrators as important are offered below:

- *Ability to motivate and work well with young children*
- *Some experience in working with or giving leadership to groups of children*
- *Emotional stability*
- *Adaptability*
- *Good health*
- *Good intelligence*
- *Willingness to work with all cultural groups*
- *Knowledge of safety and first aid procedure*
- *Typing skill*

Although at the onset of the program a stipulation was made that teacher aides should have a minimum of 60 semester hours of college credit, a very few exceptions were made in localities where there were apparently shortages of available people who could meet this qualification.

Pay for project aides was set at $290 per month for a nine and one-fourth month period. They work a full school day. All aides participate in the State employees' retirement system and in the Social Security program.

TRAINING

Training of teacher aides, except for some general State guidelines, was also a local responsibility. Since most aides had had some form of experience in working with children, nearly all of the training was on the job and under the direct supervision of the team of three teachers to which the aide was responsible. (Comments on the subject of possible training programs appear below in the section entitled *Toward the Future*.)

Several orientation conferences were held throughout the State prior to the opening of school for all CSIP aides, teachers, principals, supervisors, and college consultants. Many superintendents and assistant superintendents also attended these meetings. The sessions afforded participants the opportunity to exchange ideas about the use of teacher aides and in program development.

Another in-service effort developed especially for teacher aides was a series of drive-in two-day audiovisual media workshops held at several locations throughout the State during the fall of 1965.

DUTIES

As a means of determining something about the nature of the duties with which CSIP teacher aides were involved, a list of what was thought to be a representative sample of functions which might be performed by aides was developed. To insure that this list was reasonably representative, groups of aides and teachers attending audiovisual workshops were asked to react to the list. Recommendations for deletions and additions were solicited.

The amended list of duties was divided into six categories: (1) Clerical, (2) Housekeeping, (3) Instructional Support, (4) Technological, (5) Monitorial, and (6) General. The results of this survey of duties answered by CSIP teacher aides are offered in the form of percentages in Tables V through X.

TABLE V **CLERICAL**

Duty	Daily or More Often	Quite Often	Occasionally	Seldom	Never
Maintaining attendance records	56.0	9.7	7.6	5.5	21.2
Making out lunch reports	60.5	7.7	8.7	5.6	17.5
Taking notes at team staff meetings	7.1	19.5	18.5	12.5	42.4
Maintaining bulletin board displays	14.3	42.4	28.0	6.0	9.3
Maintaining cumulative record folders	28.0	38.5	15.0	3.5	15.0
Maintaining health records	26.3	35.2	17.0	3.1	18.4
Scoring objective tests	15.0	27.0	30.4	5.1	22.5
Processing books and supplies	15.0	26.2	20.5	11.1	27.2
Typing (general)	24.6	21.1	16.0	8.3	30.0
Preparing stencils	43.4	35.2	11.4	3.5	6.5
Collecting monies	55.5	17.6	11.5	6.7	8.7
Making progress charts	5.6	11.3	21.6	14.0	47.5
Filing and cataloging materials	17.5	22.6	21.6	11.3	27.0

TABLE VI **HOUSEKEEPING**

Duty	Daily or More Often	Quite Often	Occasionally	Seldom	Never
Insuring proper ventilation	50.3	11.3	19.1	6.6	12.7
Insuring proper lighting	47.1	11.6	18.1	7.2	16.0
Preparing room for next day's instruction	39.9	12.9	19.2	10.4	17.6
Supervising pupils in certain housekeeping chores	34.7	18.5	20.6	8.7	17.5

As Table VII shows, many CSIP teacher aides are involved in various phases of the instructional program. It is important to note that this supporting instructional function is carried out under the direct supervision of a professional teacher. Experience gained in the CSIP programs suggests that as long as the aides' participation results from mutual agreement by members of the teaching team and contributes in a positive way to the pupil's learning, such involvement is both reasonable and desirable.

Table VII indicates heavy participation in nearly all of the listed activities. Only one aide out of 200 did not assist at times with some instructional activity. (This instruction-related service was under the direct planning and supervision of the teacher.) The degree and kind of instructional support appears to depend more upon the competence and readiness of the aide than a predesigned job description. Few teachers interviewed by CSIP staff members showed any desire to delimit arbitrarily duties performed by aides under their direct supervision. There is evidently a considerable variance in the way in which various teams operate. These considerations suggest that perhaps the development of a formal list of duties prior to adequate test and evaluation might unduly restrict the evolution of a natural and productive cooperative effort.

Data presented in Table VIII suggests that aides might benefit from some training in the operation and light maintenance of audiovisual equipment. Of interest is the fact that many of the respondents who indicated that they produced transparencies (by checking either "routine" or "quite often") had attended CSIP sponsored audiovisual workshops. It seems likely that additional audiovisual media workshops would result in greater and more meaningful use of these media. However, in some schools the lack of equipment remains a limiting factor.

TABLE VII **INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT**

Duty	Daily or More Often	Quite Often	Occa-sionally	Seldom	Never
Reading and telling stories	33.5	37.3	19.2	2.5	7.5
Tutoring the individual child	38.7	26.4	17.5	6.0	11.4
Conducting small group (drill, etc.)	49.5	27.0	14.0	3.0	6.5
Assisting during library period	14.0	23.3	18.5	10.2	34.0
Assisting with any programed learning which is utilized	19.5	29.0	16.5	6.0	29.0
Conducting sharing period	18.2	18.6	24.9	9.3	29.0
Assisting with the direction of independent study	30.0	24.0	17.5	10.0	18.5
Assisting with such lessons as art, music, physical education, arithmetic, reading, science, health, social studies, and language arts	73.6	15.5	7.8	2.1	1.0

TABLE VIII **TECHNOLOGICAL**

Duty	Routine	Quite Often	Occa-sionally	Seldom	Never
Organizing group for and operating educational television	3.6	2.1	3.1	2.1	89.1
Operating and setting up 16mm projector	15.3	12.5	15.0	14.0	43.2
Coordinating film and tape service	16.4	15.0	13.0	8.1	47.5
Making overhead transparencies	7.1	2.0	11.3	8.5	71..
Operating overhead projector	10.6	9.8	17.5	8.6	53.5
Operating filmstrip projector	26.3	27.4	21.7	5.0	19.6
Operating tape recorder	16.0	13.0	16.0	9.6	45.4
Operating record player	38.9	33.4	18.6	3.5	5.6
Setting up headsets for tape recorder or record player	10.2	12.2	7.1	2.3	68.2

TABLE IX	MONITORIAL				
Duty	Routine	Quite Often	Occa-sionally	Seldom	Never
Helping with the supervision of field trips	22.8	16.6	23.9	6.2	30.5
Helping with the supervision of lunch period	72.0	13.0	8.5	3.5	3.0
Helping supervise bus loading	16.6	7.2	12.4	9.8	54.0
Supervising late bus children	13.0	6.7	13.0	4.6	62.7
Helping with wraps	33.0	14.0	19.5	13.3	20.2
Helping with playground activities	61.5	18.5	14.0	1.0	5.0
Organizing children to change locations	41.0	18.0	12.2	5.0	23.8
Transporting sick or injured children home	11.8	6.2	17.5	9.5	55.0
Supervising children at assembly programs	24.4	19.7	25.9	5.6	24.4
Supervising one or more classes permitting duty free lunch period for teachers	36.8	6.2	10.5	4.5	42.0

TABLE X	GENERAL				
Duty	Routine	Quite Often	Occa-sionally	Seldom	Never
Checking daily on the health of pupils	41.0	14.5	9.3	8.8	26.4
Making arrangements for parent-teacher conferences	68.0	12.3	9.5	3.5	6.7
Administering first aid	32.6	16.6	27.0	6.7	17.1
Contributing to school-community cooperation	21.8	15.5	16.5	5.2	41.0
Attending team meetings	53.3	22.3	13.5	2.1	8.8
Attending total staff meetings	59.2	14.5	8.5	5.2	12.6
Attending PTA meetings	58.1	16.4	9.7	4.5	11.3

Table IX lists duties categorized as monitorial. In only a few cases are aides involved in transporting sick children home or supervising bus children. Lunchroom supervision and playground supervision are evidently common responsibilities for almost all aides.

Duties which seemed unrelated to previously mentioned categories were listed under the caption "General" (Table X). Most aides attend both PTA and CSIP team meetings. For over 82 percent, some knowledge of first aid is necessary.

AIDES' REACTIONS

CSIP teacher aides were asked to respond to several additional questions with respect to their attitude toward their experience of providing instructional and clerical support for teachers.

One question posed to aides was *To what degree, if any, did your work with elementary school pupils increase your interest and concern for primary education*? The great majority of the responses were positive. Most aides felt they had developed a deeper and broader understanding of the importance of early childhood education in preparing a child to cope with school life. One aide's statement seems to reflect this viewpoint very well:

> *The enthusiasm for learning shown by small children increases my desire to further my training for primary education.*

Many others marveled at the tremendous amount of interest in learning which young children manifest.

Others expressed recognition of the responsibility and challenge which working with primary age children presents. They seemed to find a considerable amount of stimulation in working with young children which in some way activated their desire to "pitch in" and help to make it possible for the teachers with whom they work to do a more effective job. These attitudes are conveyed in the following comment:

> *It has given me a broader view of the problems the teacher faces in permitting children to learn at their own rate and the tremendous amount of work and planning she must do to enable her to successfully perform her duties as a teacher in the classroom. I see a great need for, and the value of, teacher aides in the primary field.*

A follow-up question to the one discussed above was *Do you have any plans to become certified as an elementary school teacher?*

In response to this question 49 percent said yes; 27 percent said no; and 16 percent said that they were already certified. About 5 percent indicated that they were undecided, and 3½ percent did not respond.

A number of the aides who indicated their interest in going back to school for the purpose of certification offered comments similar to the following statements:

> *I like working with this age group child. Their eagerness to learn and their enthusiasm for school are an inspiration.*
>
> *One of my reasons in taking this position was to determine whether I might want to get my certificate.*

Others stated that although they were interested they could not, at this time, return to college for financial reasons or, in some cases, because of family responsibilities. Here are some expressions of these sentiments:

> *For years I have wanted to continue my education but with a family of five children in school and college, I have not had the time or money.*
>
> *I have always enjoyed working with children. I was delighted with the opportunity as a teacher aide to fulfill my aspiration. Due to uncontrollable circumstances, I have been unable to obtain my certificate; however, this type of work has revived my keen desire to complete my education.*

A third question to which aides were asked to respond was *Please comment on any problems or difficulties which you feel have hindered you from carrying out your responsibility as a teacher aide.* Surprisingly enough, a number of aides saw their most serious problem in terms of their personal limitations rather than problems of an external nature. Others did not consider themselves as having hindering problems of sufficient magnitude to mention:

> *In all sincerity, I have not encountered any difficulties which hinder me from carrying out my assigned responsibilities as a teacher aide here at this institution. I feel that this is because of the high degree of communication, organization and planning among the teachers, administration and myself.*

Some felt that certain problems outside of their control interfered with their effectiveness. About 15 percent identified problems which closely correspond to the situations which are described below:

> *I have encountered some difficulty in teachers competing for my services and becoming disturbed when I have already begun assisting another teacher.*
>
> *The duties of a teacher aide need further clarification.*
>
> *A lack of space to work with large groups of children.*

III. HOW SCHOOL PERSONNEL PERCEIVE TEACHER AIDES

TABLE XI ATTITUDE TOWARD UTILIZATION OF AIDES

Participant	Strongly Favor	Favor	Support on Trial Basis	Hold Some Reservations About	Disapprove Of	No Response
Teacher	83.0	12.3	3.7	1.0	-0-	-0-
Principal	83.2	14.7	0.5	1.6	-0-	-0-
Supervisor	82.6	15.2	2.2	-0-	-0-	-0-
Superintendent	64.7	27.2	8.1	-0-	-0-	-0-
College Consultant	82.0	16.0	-0-	2.0	-0-	-0-

After one to two years of experience in the Comprehensive School Improvement Project with teacher aides, it was decided to find out how teachers, principals, college consultants, supervisors, and superintendents felt about the overall effectiveness of the teacher aide phase of the CSIP. To accomplish this purpose, questionnaires were developed and sent out to participants. In addition, a number of in-depth interviews were carried out.

It seemed important to determine generally the degree to which the utilization of teacher aides was supported. The question presented was *To what degree do you support the practice of utilizing teacher aides for the purpose of relieving teachers of routine clerical tasks and playing a supportive role?* Table XI shows that almost all participants favor the use of aides in their primary programs.

The strong attitudinal support for the use of aides was evident from the responses. Representative statements for each category of participants are included below:

SUPERINTENDENT:

A good teacher aide improves the morale of the teaching staff. They permit the professional teachers to spend a greater amount of their time in truly professional duties. I feel this is one of the fine possibilities of improving elementary professional services.

PRINCIPAL:

The service of an aide not only frees the teacher from much clerical work but it provides more time and an opportunity for more effective planning and teaching. In addition, the aide can provide assistance in working with individuals and small groups that need additional help in reading, arithmetic and writing.

TEACHER:

It gives the teacher more time to plan, organize and give individual attention. The teacher is free to maintain direct supervision at all times.

SUPERVISOR:

It tends to reduce teaching load and allows time for planning and executing programs of instruction adaptable to children. Too bad that we cannot place one in each classroom.

COLLEGE CONSULTANT:

The unfavorable work conditions about which so many teachers complain may be, in fact, alleviated by the proper use of the aide. The competent aide may relieve the teacher of non-instructional tasks, provide some freedom during the day from children, and provide time for planning.

It seems to me that any time we can provide additional time for the professional to do the job for which he is trained at the minor cost involved in the use of the teacher aides is a major saving to the State and more importantly an improvement in the child's opportunity for educational growth. Not only is the time saved important, but the lessening of teacher frustration is equally important to the well being of the teacher and to the teacher's effectiveness.

Only three teacher teams, two principals and one college consultant expressed some reservations about the use of aides. The statements below reflect these feelings:

So much depends on how well the teacher is able to use the aide.

The role of the aide should be spelled out more clearly.

Not yet convinced that the money spent for aide could not be more profitably used for other purposes.

Often assigned tasks are not completed accurately. This necessitates extra work.

The keeping of attendance records and the permanent record give the classroom teacher valuable information regarding the child. For this reason the teacher should maintain her own records.

Several articles in professional literature have suggested that the involvement of a teacher aide might be perceived as somewhat threatening to the professional status of teachers. It was thought that a frankly stated question would uncover any such attitude if it existed. The question asked was *Do you feel that employing teachers' aides is in any way threatening to the professional status of teachers?* The sample responding in the affirmative was less than 3 percent. Table XII shows the distribution of the responses.

Because the utilization of teacher aides, like most practices in education, must ultimately be justified in terms of contribution to the instructional program, some measure of its influence in this direction was sought. The question asked was *What positive effect has adding a teacher aide had upon the instructional program for boys and girls?* At a later date an attempt will be made to see if any changes in achievement scores were noted, but this will be done as an assessment of all facets of the CSIP program rather than as an attempt to single out and control the teacher aide phase of the program.

TABLE XII	THREAT TO PROFESSIONAL STATUS		
Respondents	Affirmative	Negative	No Response
Teachers	1.6	98.4	-0-
Principals	2.1	97.9	-0-
Supervisors	1.1	97.8	1.1
Superintendents	2.2	97.8	-0-
College Consultants	8.0	92.0	-0-

TABLE XIII
EFFECT OF UTILIZATION OF AIDE UPON INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

Participant	Very Much	Quite a Lot	Little	Very Little	None	No Response
Teacher	54.0	40.6	4.9	0.5	-0-	-0-
Principal	55.8	42.6	1.1	0.5	-0-	-0-
Supervisor	52.3	46.6	1.1	-0-	-0-	-0-
Superintendent	40.5	52.4	2.0	-0-	-0-	5.1
College Consultant	36.0	58.0	6.0	-0-	-0-	-0-

TABLE XIV	INFLUENCE ON COOPERATIVE PLANNING					
Participant	Very Much	Quite a Lot	Little	Very Little	None	No Response
Teacher	43.3	46.0	4.3	4.8	1.6	-0-
Principal	50.9	43.7	3.8	1.1	0.5	-0-
Supervisor	51.2	46.6	-0-	2-2	-0-	-0-
Superintendent	28.3	55.5	8.1	-0-	-0-	8.1
College Consultant	38.0	52.0	8.0	-0-	-0-	2.0

Table XIII provides some indication of the influence of the aide upon the instructional program as seen by the participants.

Ten teacher teams assessed the influence of utilizing an aide as from little to very little.

Two superintendents and three principals were also skeptical of the aides' influence upon the instructional program. Several statements in support of these views appear below:

> *It seems to us that this is a very quick and easy way for the teacher to lose her professional prestige with parents and children in community and school; we question if this is fair to young children, too many people in authority.*

> *Duties of aides will not be clearly understood by the public. Result—public may get impression that "anybody can teach."*

However, for the overwhelming majority the feeling was that the fact that the aide was involved in their programs made a definite difference.

Although it evidently would be difficult to determine with any high degree of certainty possible changes in emphasis in the cooperative planning of a teacher team as a result of having a teacher aide, a reaction on this subject from participants would be of some importance, it was thought. The percentages shown in Table XIV offer ample indication that participants feel that the presence of an aide encourages or enhances the chance of cooperative planning among teacher teams.

Here are some representative comments by participants in support of their positive feeling toward the aide as a beneficial influence:

> *It definitely has improved our instructional program for our boys and girls because more intense planning and cooperative spirit has been added to our program.*
>
> *Our cooperative planning seems to have improved very much. All three of our teachers and teachers' aide set aside some period during the day to sit down and go over the work accomplished for the day and plan activities for the next day or week or so. More purposeful planning has come about for the entire group rather than for just one classroom.*
>
> *Although good teachers have always done much cooperative planning, the addition of a teacher aide makes such planning mandatory. There has been much exchange of ideas and experiences because of the excellent training of both teachers and teacher aides involved in our CSIP schools.*

Several respondents indicated that the aide had little influence upon planning because most team planning occurred after school hours when the aide was generally off duty. Another mentioned that since the first grade teachers were already involved in cooperative planning, the aide had little influence upon this phase of their program. A few others suggested that in their situations the aide had some difficulty in adjusting to a helping role and, therefore, required considerable guidance from teachers. For this reason, this team felt that it was more time consuming than could be justified.

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CONCLUSIONS

Several conclusions regarding the attitude of public school personnel toward the practice of utilizing teacher aides throughout the State of North Carolina seem warranted by the mass of evidence summarized above:

1. *CSIP participants, including teachers, principals, school system supervisors and superintendents, as well as college consultants, support the practice of employing a teacher aide as an associate member of an instructional team.*

2. *CSIP participants feel that due to the efforts of a teacher aide time is increasingly redirected toward the central goal of instructional improvement in that (a) more time is spent in giving pupils individual and small group attention, (b) more time is devoted to cooperative planning of learning experiences for pupils, and (c) more attention is given to the pupils' personal-social needs.*

3. *The duties of the teacher aide change with the passage of time and the development of harmonious team working relationships.*

4. *The success of a teacher aide depends in large measure upon a mutually cooperative relationship between the aide and the teachers.*

5. *The use of the teacher aide encourages extended use of audiovisual media and instructional materials.*

RECOMMENDATIONS

Because of developing interest in the utilization of teacher aides stimulated by increased Federal support of educational programs, a number of recommendations concerning the selection, training and in-service education of aides are presented:

1. *That consideration be given to employing teacher aides to relieve the teacher of certain clerical duties and to provide instructional support.*
2. *That there is a need to clarify further the role of the teacher aide.*
3. *That consideration be given to employment of some male aides within elementary schools.*
4. *That some form of pre-service orientation be initiated for aides, principals, and teachers.*
5. *That the major portion of an aide's training take the form of on-the-job training.*
6. *That in-service education programs, including opportunities for aides to get together and exchange ideas, be promoted.*
7. *That any activities engaged in by the aide be carried out under the supervision of the teacher.*
8. *That consideration be given to providing salary increments for aides commensurate with merit.*
9. *That when possible, aids be afforded an opportunity to observe the performance of other aides in neighboring schools.*
10. *That any administrators planning to develop a list of specific duties which might tend to arbitrarily limit the role of the aide proceed with caution in this direction.*
11. *That the role of the teacher aide at the secondary level may vary considerably from that of her elementary counterpart.*

V. TOWARD THE FUTURE

Experience gained through utilizing teacher aides in selected elementary schools throughout the State of North Carolina has been of strategic importance in pointing toward possible future guidelines. Yet a host of unanswered questions remains. Some problems which appear to be more pressing are discussed below. An attempt is made in some cases to offer tentative suggestions which might serve as possible departure points for solving these problems. These comments represent a very small sample of opinions of educators in the State as to possible ways of approaching solutions to the problem each question presents.

1. *What type of training program might prove most effective in preparing candidates for their role as teacher aide?*

Traditionally, training programs have been centered on a common core of experiences and information deemed necessary to prepare the trainee for successful fulfillment of specified responsibilities. Such a procedure is time-consuming and often somewhat frustrating to the trainee in that he may not see the relationship between the instruction and the responsibility for which he is being prepared. Teacher aide trainees are more likely to respond to an action oriented program based on what their experiences tell them they need to know rather than what some theorist suggests that they need to know. For this reason, many educators have suggested field laboratory training experience or on-the-job training as preferable for teacher aides. Such training might be conceived as an apprenticeship under the primary direction of one or more practicing teachers with an occasional visit from a general coordinator who would be responsible for supervising 20 to 30 trainees. The length of the training period would be determined as a result of

experience gained from field training. Certain days could be set up for area workshops conducted along seminar lines, which would deal mainly with problem solving. These sessions might be held one day a week for the duration of the training period. Specific skills and information which the trainee needs to learn might be acquired through extension courses, the use of programed materials, and educational television, where the demand would justify the expense. In this way the program of study could be individualized. The aide's weaknesses or needs would be diagnosed by both the coordinator and the supervising teacher. Training for skills such as typing, when deemed desirable, might be contracted through a community college or local business college, or provided by some other workable arrangement. It is possible that final selection of candidates might be determined after several weeks of observation and participation in the school setting. The reasoning behind this idea is that time should be allowed for the prospective teacher aide to find out how he or she feels about working with children and how the children respond to the candidate's presence. This would also permit the supervising teacher to make some judgments concerning the candidate's contribution.

Another feature which many participants felt would improve the preparation of teacher aide candidates is an opportunity to observe viable learning situations where teacher aides were functioning well as members of instructional teams. Also, it was suggested, several opportunities to travel with a social worker would no doubt be most valuable in helping the aide become more aware of the different backgrounds of the children.

2. *Assuming that it would be desirable to have a certain number of men functioning as teacher aides within elementary schools, would it be realistic to attempt to employ them at the present CSIP basic salary of $290 per month?*

A number of psychologists, sociologists, psychiatrists have advised that it would be desirable if there were more male influences from the kindergarten all the way through the elementary school grades. Young children, some authorities feel, need masculine associations at school, since this block of time represents a large portion of their waking hours. Identification with a male figure is deemed important to the fuller development of both boys and girls, particularly since they are to live in a world which is often divided or stratified in terms of sex. At present very little opportunity exists in elementary education for the development of such relationships. This situation prevails primarily because of the demands upon the male as breadwinner in most families and the fact that most young men do not feel that a teaching salary is competitive with that associated with commensurate responsibility in the business world. This condition is improving but certainly not to the degree and with the rapidity which would seem desirable.

Returning to the original question, and assuming the desirability of employing some men as teacher aides, would it be realistic to attempt to attract them at the present salary? The best answer appears to be to try it, perhaps with a specific group of men in mind —the early retirees, for example. Many unusually alert, capable and well educated people retire early from the armed services and industry.

It is quite possible that there would be a sufficient pool of these people living in many areas who would be interested in a 10-month job with no responsibility after 4:00 p.m. Some schools in the North, notably those operating in New York City or the Ford Foundation's Catskill Project, have had success with hiring some male retirees who have made a considerable contribution to the school program.

3. *Should salary schedules for teacher aides make provision for advancement? If so, would this be hinged, like many increment plans for teachers, mainly upon "time in grade" and degree of educational attainment?*

Nearly everyone seeking employment who is fortunate enough to have several promising possibilities gives consideration to the opportunities for advancement and financial gain. Therefore, some consideration and planning with respect to salary schedule development must be forthcoming as the practice of utilizing aides

increases. Large systems such as New York City and Norwalk, Connecticut, have had salary schedules for aides with several increment steps for several years.

Whether the traditional method of paying teachers based upon "time in grade" and longevity should function as a model for the development of a salary schedule for aides remains to be seen. Perhaps the question of merit should be given serious consideration and study. Certainly with a new program in the offing, the time is ripe for introducing some new concepts which might offer encouragement for self-improvement and increased productivity.

4. *Can teacher aides contribute to the establishment of a warm learning climate by providing certain disadvantaged children and underachievers with increased support?*

As has been stated in the *LINC Quarterly*, education has suddenly been handed "the related problems of poverty, unemployment, racial prejudice and depressed areas." The professional educator is accepting an increasing responsibility for helping children to "become" and in solving numerous and complex social problems; he is getting more perceptive as to the basic needs of children, as is demonstrated by the frequent appearance of words like *educationally deprived, culturally deprived,* and *underachiever.* All of these terms are associated with programs being underwritten by huge sums of money from the Federal government and, to a lesser degree, certain private philanthropic foundations. Part of the solution to many of the problems involved in planning programs which succeed in encouraging positive behavior and attitudes on the part of children toward learning and life may be found in facilitating personal support for each child. This is no more than conveying a belief and faith in and listening empathically to each child. Though this point is so simple and basic that it is often overlooked in planning programs for children, it evidently has a great deal to do with many children's success or failure in school. It is in this capacity that the aide could make a substantial contribution. There is as yet little experience in public education which would permit an evaluation of the practice of utilizing aides for the express purpose of providing additional personal support for children at the elementary school level, where children are forming so many of the attitudes which will shape and mold their lives.

5. *Should the teacher aide operate within well-defined limits?*

A review of the literature over the past 10 years reveals a concern on the part of some professional educators as to possible encroachment by teacher aides upon the duties and prerogatives of certified teachers. A parallel situation may have existed at one time in hospitals, where numerous nonprofessional personnel perform functions in support of the medical doctor, or within the several engineering fields, where an apparently thin line separates the function of the engineer from his assistant. Many other comparable situations exist and are on the increase, partly because of a shortage of qualified people to meet the demands of a technological revolution exceed the supply. With respect to the teacher aide, a recent editorial in the *Phi Delta Kappan** warns of the danger in developing a separate list of approved duties which are to be performed. Such a practice would tend to set artificial limits on the basis of generalization rather than the individual's readiness and competence. The editorial concludes that the teacher aide should be restricted only in terms of his personal limitations rather than an arbitrarily conceived list of duties in carrying out duties assigned by the teacher. The success of the teacher-teacher aide effort, like that of most cooperative endeavors, depends upon a close productive working relationship with the teacher as the senior member.

While a workable solution to the problem of establishing guidelines for teacher aides may prove somewhat thorny for the school administrators who are seeking to keep their staff relationships flexible, a period of test and evaluation will be necessary before any final development. The final evaluation must be based primarily upon the criterion of what contributes best to the growth of the pupils.

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